

Welcome To 2008

"But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." (Deut. 11:11-12, ESV)

By the time you read these words, it may be several days after New Years Day. I'd like to welcome you to another year of opportunity in which we may stoke the flames of our desires to serve Yahweh our God with every ability in each season he has provided. Well met, new year!

Let's dwell for a moment on the land that God gave to Israel. Why did God give Israel Canaan land? God did not give this land to Israel because they were righteous by their own works, but Israel took possession of the land because the original inhabitants were wicked. (Deut. 9:5) Likewise, God has not added us to Christ's church and given us blessings in life because we have earned them, but because God is the one who justifies the ungodly and he loves us. (Rom. 4:5) Let's keep this in mind as we take possession of this year, that each day is freely given to us by God as opportunity to glorify him. It is because our God is a gracious God that he gives us opportunities to repent, to restore, and to rise up and build. (Rom. 2:4; Neh. 2:18)

So, how should we set our minds as we press on to to dwell in this year we are now entering?

1. Let us obey God by renewing our gift. Let us give him our heart, soul, and entire being this year, and dedicate it to him. (Deut. 10:10) As God has given us another year, let us give the firstfruits back to him. Let us prepare for our service by reminding ourselves of God's love for us.

2. Let us do good works as a demonstration of our service to God. (Deut. 10:10) Because we are justified in Jesus, let us jump at each chance to join in good works. Let us show our love for God by our moving hands.

3. Let us expect good things from God. (Deut. 10:10) If the Jews were to expect early and late rain that they might gather the produce of their fields, their wine and grain, what better things has God prepared for us who sow to the spirit? Indeed, we are God's field and heaven awaits us. (1 Cor. 3:9) Let us plan for a bountiful harvest!

How are you preparing to set your mind, heart and soul? What plans are you making for your hands, to lift them up to God's instructions? (Psa. 119:48) Let us spread out our hands and call upon Yahweh God as we contemplate this coming year. God's eyes are already upon it; In this new year, let us rise up and build!